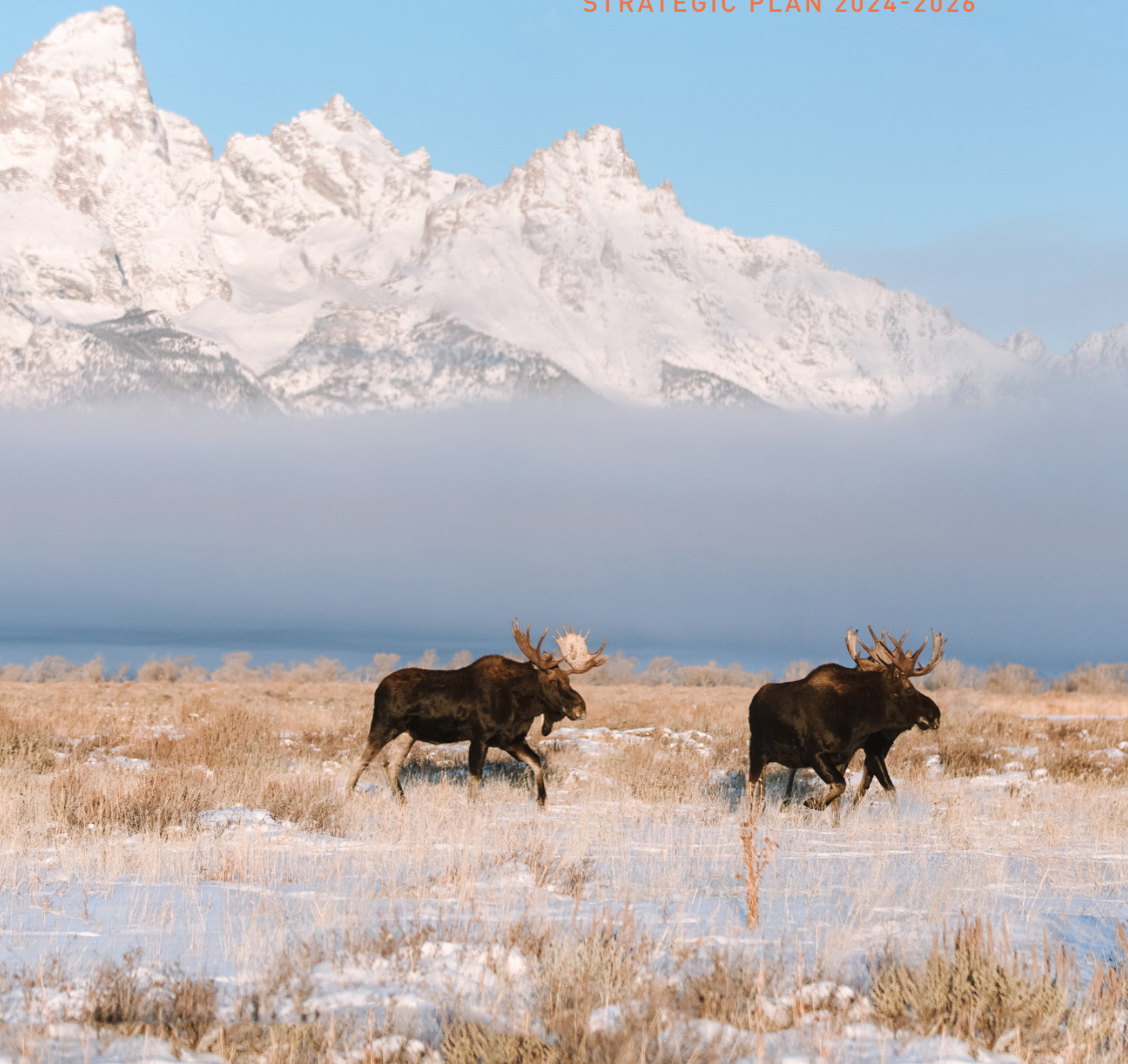


# **Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2026



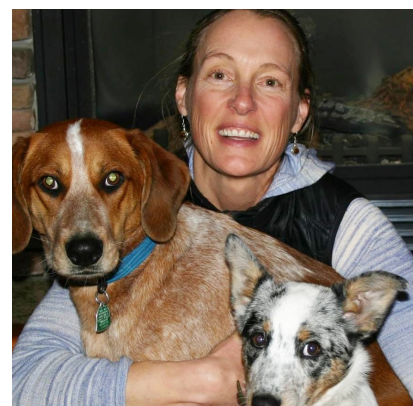
# Welcome

*from the Executive Director*

It is no secret that we live in one of the most intact ecosystems in North America, which is home to many species of charismatic wild animals. This also means that many people want to live in and visit this amazing place, which takes a toll on our local wildlife and their habitats — compounding the impacts of climate change, wildlife disease, and other stressors. Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation shares a passion for healthy wildlife with a community that cares as deeply as we do. We all play a role in conserving our iconic ecosystem. To effectively conserve wildlife and their habitats we need to define our niche so we can strengthen our partnerships and reduce redundancy. Strategic Planning allows us to assess the current and future conservation needs, define our role, focus our mission, and work alongside our colleagues with the greatest efficiency and synergy.

I am eager for the journey ahead as we begin to implement our new Strategic Plan. We are a strong team and we are known for our robust partnerships, our deep understanding of the importance of science, and our ability to engage large groups of volunteers in hands-on conservation activities.

Our new Strategic Plan identifies how we can expand and adapt to meet the conservation challenges of the future, while holding strong to the core values that have made us who we are for the last three decades. What a great way to celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary—by honing our focus to advance wildlife conservation driven by science, collaboration, and a community of volunteers. I hope you find our plans as exciting as I do!



**Renee Seidler**  
Executive Director



# Welcome

*from the Board President*



**Ross MacIntyre**  
Board President

**H**ello and welcome to the Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation Strategic Plan. This plan is the culmination of a significant amount of time and effort on the part of our entire staff and board, with the help and guidance of our strategic planning consultants, Yellow Tree Strategy. We began this process in 2022 by refreshing our mission and vision statements, then the board and staff identified our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. We then reached outside the organization in 2023 to solicit input from a wide selection of donors, volunteers, partners, and leaders of other regional conservation organizations and agencies. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to all the individuals who generously shared their time and insights.

2023 marks the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation. Over its lifetime, and particularly it seems over the last 5 years, we have seen enormous changes in our community that present significant challenges to achieving the Foundation's mission and preserving the wildlife and habitat that are so critical to the character and future of Jackson Hole and the surrounding regions.

With this strategic plan, our incredibly talented and dedicated staff and board, and our passionate community of volunteers, donors, partners and other supporters, I'm confident that we can successfully address these challenges and I'm very excited about the future of Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation and all that we will achieve.

# Mission & Vision

## OUR MISSION

**Advance wildlife conservation driven by science, collaboration, and a community of volunteers.**

We accomplish our mission primarily through on-the-ground projects guided in collaboration with agencies, organizations, and private landowners. We also gather and disseminate wildlife data that can inform policy and educate the public.

## OUR LONG-TERM VISION

**We envision a landscape where wildlife and people coexist and thrive:**

Where healthy populations of native wildlife flourish and are able to move across the landscape with little or no human-caused conflicts or barriers, and where people can experience wildlife regularly and safely. Our vision is that Jackson Hole and surrounding communities conserve wildlife and their habitats through informed decisions around land use, development, and a changing climate.



# High-Level Goals

# 1

## **Healthy Wildlife Populations**

Conserve and protect native wildlife populations through research and hands-on conservation.

# 3

## **Reduced Human-Wildlife Conflict**

Achieve major reductions in human-wildlife conflicts, including wildlife-vehicle collisions and human-bear conflicts.

# 2

## **Intact Ecosystems and Large Landscape Connectivity**

Protect and connect wildlife habitat and minimize human-created barriers to movement. Management decisions are made in the context of local and large landscape connectivity.

# 4

## **Increased Community Awareness, Participation, and Collaboration**

Prioritize wildlife and habitat conservation in community and individual decisions. Enable locals and visitors to play a pronounced role in conserving wildlife and habitat. Increase collaboration across the public, agencies, nonprofits, and government to achieve more effective wildlife conservation.

# Key Strategic Questions

## **GEOGRAPHY & ADVOCACY**

Our team, partners, and stakeholders identified two key strategic areas our organization needs to clarify: geography and advocacy. The following principles outline how we will engage within the timeframe of this strategic plan.

### **Geography: what is the geographic scope of our work?**

Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation has worked outside of Jackson Hole and Teton County for decades, belying our name. We will continue working in this larger-than-Jackson-Hole geography – generally defined as the area where native wildlife disperse and migrate to and from. During the next three years, we will consider a name change and/or rebranding effort that better aligns with the reality of our work and the reality of wildlife connectivity across the landscape.

### **Advocacy: what is our appropriate role?**

Jackson Hole Wildlife Foundation accomplishes conservation through hands-on volunteer projects and by working closely with agencies, private landowners, and other partners to pursue our mission. We advocate for wildlife based on science, and we support policies that are consistent with our mission. When we are concerned about agency / partner decisions, we strive for honest, confidential discussions. When needed, we advocate for wildlife publicly, using science and expert knowledge to guide policy makers, planners, and managers to sound decisions that protect wildlife and habitat.



## Strategic Program Initiatives

# 1

### Nature Mapping Jackson Hole (NMJH)

NMJH supports our Goal #1 *Healthy Wildlife Populations* by providing data to agencies and other relevant end users, leading to pro-wildlife policy, funding, and regulations. NMJH also supports Goal #4 *Increased Community Awareness, Participation, and Collaboration*.

#### PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES BY 2026

1. Further the scientific rigor of NMJH projects: Outline which data collection methods and projects meet expected scientific rigor and will continue, and which will phase out.
2. Increase the reach and impact of NMJH data by distilling information into publicly accessible reports (like the Wildlife-Vehicle Collisions (WVC) report) and presenting / sharing them.

#### INTERNAL PROGRAM GOAL HIGHLIGHT

Increase communication and outreach and widen participation in NMJH, with a focus on students, families, immigrant, and older community members. Begin any outreach to non-English-speaking community members with training, inquiry, and outreach to organizations already embedded in the community.





# 2

## Habitat Restoration Program

The Habitat Restoration program is the natural outgrowth from our successful Wildlife Friendlier Fence (WFF) program. It supports Goal #1 *Healthy Wildlife Populations*, Goal #2 *Intact Ecosystems / Large Landscape Connectivity*, and Goal #3 *Reduced Conflict* by restoring critical habitat and allowing wildlife the ability to move freely across seasonal ranges and explore new territories, helping them to be resilient and adaptive to climate change. It includes fence removal, wildlife friendlier fencing, invasive weed removal and control, and other potential habitat restoration projects.

### PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES BY 2026

#### 1. Wildlife Friendlier Fencing (WFF)

- a. Remove or improve no less than 30 miles of public and / or private land fencing by 2026, for a total of 270 miles of fence removed or modified by JHWF since program inception.
- b. Formalize and expand seasonal livestock fence raise / lower program.
- c. Increase public awareness about wildlife movement, seasonal behavior and migration, and WFF Land Development Regulations through educational events, communication, volunteer days, and partnerships.
- d. Maintain strong volunteer base sufficient to achieve above goals.

#### 2. Invasive Weeds Management

- a. Initiate invasive weed removal work with an annual commitment to manage invasive weeds at Coburn Meadow on the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

- b. Identify and implement new invasive weed removal projects with partners. Ensure collaborative and shared efforts with the Jackson Hole Weed Management Association.
- c. Mitigate the spread of invasive species to strengthen ecosystems and make them more resilient to the effects of climate change.

#### 3. Habitat Restoration Strategy: Feasibility Analysis

- a. Assess feasibility of county-wide habitat restoration strategy for riparian / terrestrial / upland habitat with appropriate partners.
- b. *If feasible*, develop a timeline for strategy implementation and prioritization.



# 3

## Bear Wise Jackson Hole

Bear Wise Jackson Hole (Bear Wise JH) is a cooperatively funded and implemented program. We develop the goals and program plan in collaboration with our key partners: Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Bridger-Teton National Forest, and Grand Teton National Park, with collaboration from the Town of Jackson, Teton County, and US Fish & Wildlife Service Grizzly Bear Recovery Program. Bear Wise JH supports Goal #3 *Reducing Human-Wildlife Conflict*, and is a leader in bear education and conflict mitigation measures in Teton County (Goal #4). The partnership's goal is "To keep bears wild and people safe in Teton County, Wyoming."

### PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES FROM BEAR WISE JH WORK PLAN

1. Bear Wise JH messaging reaches thousands of residents, business owners, and visitors staying in Teton County.
2. Homes and businesses are in compliance with bear-resistant trash container requirements and other wildlife feeding land development regulations (LDRs) outlined in Teton County regulation and Town of Jackson ordinances.

### INTERNAL PROGRAM GOAL HIGHLIGHT

Define roles and responsibilities of partners, including the ideal role for JHWF:

- a. Update 3-year work plan for Bear Wise JH Program Manager.
- b. Work with partners to develop a long-term vision of Bear Wise JH.





# 4

## Give Wildlife a Brake

JHWF's Give Wildlife a Brake program will lead efforts to help Teton County significantly reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions (WVCs) and increase connectivity, supporting Goals #1, #2, and #3. Through Give Wildlife a Brake, JHWF will be an important partner to Teton County and WYDOT in building the next phase of priority wildlife crossings.

### PROGRAMMATIC OUTCOMES BY 2026

1. Actively support wildlife crossings and funnel fence construction at 22 / 390, leading to a 90% reduction in WVCs. Monitor and ensure effectiveness of the crossings with challenges such as potential development at Stilson.
2. Participate as a strategic partner to Teton County as they design and begin implementation of crossing structures at Fish Hatchery, Teton Pass, and Hoback / Camp Creek.
3. Establish and monitor measures of landscape permeability, wildlife movements, wildlife-vehicle collisions, and connectivity, in partnership with WGFD, WYDOT, and university partners.
4. Provide WVC and landscape permeability data and metrics to WYDOT, Teton County, and other stakeholders, for use in transportation planning / development decisions (including traffic calming measures, road redesign, speed limits, etc).
5. Support research around experimental mitigation tools.
6. Understand how road and traffic mitigation can help animals move more safely across the landscape to adapt to the changing climate. Plan future wildlife crossing structures in places where they will help animals move to new habitats and where they can address present and future landscape needs.



# 5

## **Being Wild Jackson Hole**

JHWF is currently the lead entity hosting Being Wild Jackson Hole, a Jackson Hole Travel & Tourism Board funded outreach campaign intended to increase visitor awareness of ecosystem health, conservation priorities, and wildlife safety best practices. JHWF may not be ideally positioned to scale this campaign to its full potential. We will consider handing off the program to another lead entity, and focusing our work on connecting visitors (engaged by Being Wild marketing) to our existing volunteer projects and conservation messaging.

# 6

## **Potential new program: Wildlife Stewardship Fund**

Investigate creating a sustainable funding source for wildlife conservation by community members, landowners, agencies, and individuals. Enhance private property to be wildlife friendlier. Fund could support all JHWF Goals: #1, #2, #3, and #4.

# Acknowledgements

**Many people contributed their insight and wisdom to this strategic plan, including:**

## **JHWF BOARD**

Ross MacIntyre, President  
Leslie Steen, Vice President  
Mary Ellen Fausone, Secretary  
Dan Bernstein, Treasurer  
Ben Wise  
Jennifer (Jenn) Newton  
William (Bill) Rudd  
Dale Naylor  
Gregg Servheen  
Kathryn Mapes Turner

## **JHWF STAFF**

Renee Seidler, Executive Director  
Kate Gersh, Associate Director  
Kole Stewart, BearWise Jackson Hole Program Manager  
Kyle Kisson, Communications Manager  
Hilary Turner, Program Coordinator

## **JHWF STRATEGIC PLAN TASK FORCE (SPECIAL THANKS!)**

Dan Bernstein, chair  
Gregg Servheen  
Renee Seidler

## **STAKEHOLDERS & INTERVIEWS**

JHWF extends sincere thanks to the many members of our community who gave their time to answering survey questions and participating in one-on-one interviews. We look forward to realizing the goals of the plan in the coming years and creating a bright future together for JHWF and the people and wildlife we serve.

## **PHOTO CREDITS:**

Hilary Turner teaching: Zach Andres  
Winding wire on a cold, cloudy day: Christine Paige  
Fox: Henry Holdsworth  
Moose on snowy road: Mark Gocke  
Trapper's Point overpass: Jeff Burrell



*Yellow Tree Strategy facilitated this strategic plan. We appreciate the JHWF team for their energy and passion to take their work to the next level!*





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